When all the knots of his heart are untied here, the mortal becomes immortal.

Katha Upanishad

THEOSOPHY

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EGOIC EVOLUTION

A CENTRAL task undertaken by H. P. Blavatsky in writing *The Secret Doctrine* was to elaborate upon and distinguish the lines of evolution which she speaks of on page 181 of Volume I. They are three distinct systems of development, each having its own laws, and each "ruled and guided by different sets of the highest Dhyanis." All three are represented in man, the Microcosm, and, she says, "it is the union of these three streams in him which makes him the complex being he now is."

The instruction which *The Secret Doctrine* provides concerning these processes of development may be recognized as itself a part of the Intellectual line, represented by the Manasa-Dhyanis, the high beings who are "givers of intelligence and consciousness" to man. It is through these beings that the "Lunar Monads," man's psycho-physical ancestors, *become* true men. A little later (I, 184), we are told that "the monad which becomes human *is not the Man.*" For man is essentially a mind-being, whose spiritual origin is in Mahat, the universal Mind principle, and he achieves, not his original nature, but conscious *individuality on earth* (II, 241), by means of the fusion of mind with the lower psychic principles. It is this incarnated individuality which *evolves*: "The human *Ego* is neither Atman nor Buddhi, but the higher *Manas*: the intellectual fruition and the efflorescence of the intellectual self-conscious *Egotism*—in the higher spiritual sense." (II, 79.) This Ego is also identified as *Karana Sarira* on the plane of *Sutratma*, "the golden thread on which, like beads, the various personalities of this higher

Ego are strung." Such mind-born beings have no hand in man's physical "creation." (II, 80.) The meaning of the fulfillment of this line of evolution is briefly suggested (II, 167) by the statement that the spiritual Dhyanis who are the "givers" of mind "had become 'intellectual' through their contact with matter, because they had already reached, during previous cycles of incarnation, that degree of intellect which enabled them to become independent and self-conscious entities, *on this plane* of matter." From either hints or what seem direct statements, it seems possible to think of them as "returning *Nirvanees*," reborn "only by reason of Karmic effects." Such incarnations result in Arhats or sages, H. P. B. says.

But the process is clear, the necessity of their incarnation also being explained by the statement that such mind-beings are "entities seeking to become still more conscious by uniting with more developed matter." Earthly, human experiences are required for them to become *all-wise*. Those who are acquiring their intellectuality in the present Manvantaric cycle constitute average humanity.

From this broad outline of intellectual evolution, we may turn to the observations made by H. P. B. concerning the development of the *God-Idea*, which, she says, "proceeds apace with man's own intellectual evolution." This development, which is the practical equivalent of self-knowledge, proceeds gradually. Each historical cycle presents opportunity for a kind of growth uniquely possible during that cycle. There is, then, a general scheme of development for races, nations, and individuals, establishing possibilities and setting limits for thinkers of every sort. This law is clearly stated on pages 326-27 of Vol. I, and it follows that adepts who know this law, in its various applications, are in a position to function with full understanding as educators. They are, so to speak, conscious implementers of evolutionary Law; their knowledge of Necessity makes them Masters of opportunity.

Can there be no exceptions to the rule of these cycles in respect to human progress? H. P. B. does suggest one exception, for she states the law in this way: "*Outside of initiation*, the ideals of contemporary thought must always have their wings clipped and remain unable to soar higher; for idealistic as well as realistic thinkers, and even free-thinkers, are but the outcome and natural product of their respective environments and periods." This statement is not expanded upon except by implication in multiple ways,

although there is a passing reference to the possibility of accelerated learning in her article, "Let Every Man Prove His Own Work": "The Theosophist who desires to enter upon occultism takes some of Nature's privileges into his own hands, by that very wish, and soon discovers that experiences come to him with double-quick rapidity. His business is then to recognise that he is under a —to him—new and swifter law of development, and to snatch at the lessons that come to him."

Reflection on this may bring some basic questions. What, we may ask, is the work of the adepts, the Teachers? From what has been said, we are able to think of them as forming the conscious growing-tip of man's evolutionary process; this must be so, since the underlying law for manasic beings is that progress results only from "self-induced and self-devised efforts," it following that those who are the most conscious, the most developed in individuality "on this plane of matter," would naturally embody in themselves the paradigmatic processes of egoic evolution. And by reason of the ultimate unity of all mind-born beings, to know as an adept knows would also be to teach as an adept teaches. Learning and growing are other faces of teaching and nurturing. It is, then, a natural law of conscious beinghood for the Elder Brothers to "watch over the progress of the less progressed," to "preserve the knowledge gained," and to "continually seek for opportunities of drawing the developing intelligence of the race . . . to consider the great truths concerning the destiny of the soul."

It seems apparent that these opportunities are of two general sorts. One, of which H. P. B. spoke in countless ways, is the path which leads to Initiation. Even before writing *Isis Unveiled* she had given various hints, in her critical discussions of Spiritualism, concerning avenues which might be open in this direction. In *Isis* the hints became clearer, and in *The Key to Theosophy* explicit statements were made concerning opportunities which were available. Her *Secret Doctrine* was identified by title as the hidden knowledge belonging to initiates, which now could in part, be given to the world. But since "self-induced and self-devised efforts" are the only means of progress for beings of mind, finding the way to initiation requires the questing of independent and eager souls. No one can be "led" in self-reliant evolution, since self-discovery is the crucial portal on the way to what may be called "divine life," or

fully conscious existence. We may be confident that the Teachers have always done "enough"—neither too little nor too much, but what is possible and necessary—in respect to pointing to cyclic opportunity.

The other work of the adepts is also described, mostly in general, but occasionally with some few particulars. There is this familiar passage in *The Secret Doctrine* (I, 611-12):

> The exact extent, depth, breadth, and length of the mysteries of Nature are to be found only in Eastern esoteric sciences. So vast and so profound are these that hardly a few, a very few of the highest Initiates—those *whose very existence is known but to a small number of Adepts*—are capable of assimilating the knowledge. Yet it is all there, and one by one facts and processes in Nature's workshops are permitted to find their way into the exact Sciences, while mysterious help is given to rare individuals in unravelling its arcana.

Again (I, 558):

> Occult philosophy divulges few of its most important vital mysteries. It drops them like precious pearls, one by one, far and wide apart, and only when forced to do so by the evolutionary tidal wave that carries on humanity slowly, silently, but steadily toward the dawn of the Sixth-Race mankind. For once out of the safe custody of their legitimate heirs and keepers, those mysteries cease to be occult: they fall into the public domain and have to run the risk of becoming in the hands of the selfish—of the *Cains* of the human race—curses more often than blessings.

By reason of the very nature of human or intellectual evolution, the Teachers never attempt "control" of men's minds, but present opportunities (I, 622.):

> Those who are the heirs to primeval revelations have taught these "possibilities" in every century, but have never found a fair hearing. The truths inspired to Kepler, Leibnitz, Gassendi, Swedenborg, etc., were ever alloyed with their own speculations in one or another predetermined direction—hence distorted.

All that is said by H.P.B. in "Is Theosophy a Religion?" is applicable here, describing the fate suffered by transcendental ideas at the hands of men who impose upon inspired intuitions which come to them the narrowing limitations of their age. Yet there is progress. The cycles succeed cycles, and the filtering of philosophical teachings from higher planes has its refining and uplifting effect on thought. It is quite reasonable to think of H.P.B. as

having given in the work that she did in the world a magnificent demonstration of the process of adept influence and inspiration. The only difference between much of her work and what we think of as *nirmanakayic* inspiration is that she was (partly) known to the world, and her work was written down and is widely available in her books.

In general, the truths "inspired" to the distinguished men of an epoch give that period a strong impulse of forward evolution, and it well may be that when we study intellectual history, we are in some measure studying the bench marks of cyclic inspiration, the manasic progress stimulated in large part by the custodians and teachers of occult knowledge—those who know, as Mr. Judge said, "the meaning and times of the cycles." One can also see, with the help of the *Index* to *The Secret Doctrine*, how H.P.B. used the best thinkers of her time, quoting from them utterances that were sometimes wiser than they knew, and using them as foundation and structural members of the bridge she constructed between the mind of the age and the far more inclusive wisdom of the adepts.

One of her most difficult tasks was the correction she undertook to make in the modern theory of Evolution—so proudly and confidently held by champions and followers of Darwin, already intoxicated with the champagne of victory over the bigotry of religious authority and the blindness of hereditary belief. We may think, however, that the presence in the world of honest and thoughtful men of science whose intuitions led them to doubt and question the ape-ancestors Darwin provided, helped to make possible publication of this aspect of occult anthropology. H.P.B. wrote in one place (*S.D.* II, 682):

> Finally, the absurdity of such an *unnatural* descent of man is so palpable in the face of all the proofs and evidence of the skull of the pithecoid as compared to that of man, that even de Quatrefages resorted unconsciously to our esoteric theory by saying *that it is rather the apes that can claim descent from man* than *vice versa.* As proven by Gratiolet, with regard to the cavities of the brain of the anthropoids, in which species that organ develops in an inverse ratio to what would be the case were the corresponding organs in man really the product of the development of the said organs in the apes—the size of the human skull and its brain, as well as the cavities, increase with the individual development of man. His intellect develops and

> increases with age, while his facial bones and jaws diminish and straighten, thus being more and more spiritualized: whereas with the ape it is the reverse. In its youth the anthropoid is far more intelligent and good-natured, while with age it becomes duller; and, as its skull recedes and seems to diminish as it grows, its facial bones and jaws develop, the brain being finally crushed, and thrown entirely back, to make with every day more room for the animal type. The organ of thought—the brain—recedes and diminishes, entirely conquered and replaced by that of the wild beast—the jaw apparatus.
>
> Thus, as wittily remarked in the French work, a gorilla would have a perfect right to address an Evolutionist, claiming its right of descent from himself. . . . This is where the Occult Sciences agree entirely with de Quatrefages. Owing to the very type of his development man *cannot descend* from either an ape or an ancestor common to both, but shows his origin from a type far superior to himself. And this type is the "Heavenly man"—the Dhyan Chohans, or the *Pitris* so-called. . . .

Of equal interest is the way in which H.P.B. takes the highest reaches of philosophical speculation—the limit, one might say, of the nineteenth-century intellect in the West—and presses them to better conclusions, while showing their shortcomings. She does this with thinkers such as Schopenhauer, von Hartmann, and Spencer, revealing what they have missed, however advanced their thought by comparison with their contemporaries. Again, she examines the logic of the psychologists in the West since Hume (*S.D.* II, 156 fn.), showing the futility of an "idealism" so lacking in substance that it ends in annihilation of egoity. In her posthumously published article, "Psychology," she carries this sort of analysis further, preferring an honest materialism to the pretensions of psychologists who dissolve the possibility of pure self-consciousness by a reductionist logic. Self-knowledge is declared to be logically impossible by an authority quoted by Herbert Spencer, bringing from her the explanation that the true self is "The Higher Self or Buddhi-Manas, which in the act of self-analysis or highest abstract thinking, partially reveals its presence and holds the subservient brain-consciousness in review." The Human negation of the self is thus disposed of. She concludes this article—which may have been unfinished—by raising and answering basic questions:

> What is the *noumenon* of those mental phenomena which make up the external consciousness of the physical man? What is it which we recognize as the terrestrial "self" and which—

> monists and materialists notwithstanding—does control and regulate the flow of its own mental states. No occultist would for a moment deny that the materialistic theory as to the relations of mind and brain is in its way expressive of the truth that the *superficial* brain-consciousness or "phenomenal self" is bound up for all practical purposes with the integrity of the cerebral matter. This brain consciousness or personality is mortal, being but a distorted reflection through a physical basis of the manasic self. It is an instrument for harvesting experience for the Buddhi-Manas or monad, and saturating it with the aroma of consciously-acquired experience. But for all that the "brain-self" is real while it lasts, and weaves its Karma as a responsible entity. Esoterically explained it is the consciousness inhering in that lower portion of the Manas which is correlated with the physical brain.

The full gamut of significant nineteenth-century thought—science, religion, philosophy, literature—is explored and used, its best distilled and related to the occult teachings, its worst exposed as of no value—in the writings of H.P. Blavatsky. In "Synthesis of Occult Science," Mr. Judge remarks that while the authors of the ancient wisdom "have spoken from at least two whole planes of conscious experience beyond that of our everyday 'sense-perception'," at the same time, the book itself, *The Secret Doctrine*, "in addressing itself to the thought of an age," recognizes the law of cycles that rules in the intellectual development of a race, and consequently addresses the times "from that plane of thought that is in the ascendant." So, H.P.B.'s work reaches into the thought of the time and at the same time lifts it to a higher synthesis, using for leverage the occult doctrines which were being made available, and therefore "occult" no more. These teachings were in process of gradually becoming a part of the mind of the times. Thus we have an illustration of the way in which conscious agents of evolution carry on their work, helping on the progress spoken of in the passage quoted earlier, on the Evolution of the God-Idea. The complexity of the subject of intellectual evolution, which we have had briefly under consideration, is more easily understood when it is realized that the three lines of evolution—Spiritual, Intellectual, and Physical—"are inextricably interwoven and interblended at every point."

FROM "THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM"

Right Action

Mr. Sinnett says: "It is not the goody-good or devoutly aspiring man that attains to the highest development." What is the highest development, and how best attained?

W.Q.J.—I should like to add that Mr. Sinnett had in view the doctrine found in many books old and new that wisdom as well as virtue is needed in him who aspires to the "highest development." Virtue leads only to heaven, wisdom leads to union with the whole. But wisdom must at last have virtue as companion. Virtue pursued and practiced through many lives will lead at last to wisdom, yet wisdom first attained makes the cultivation of virtue easier. The highest development cannot be attained in any single incarnation. The teachers say that we must seek the company of those who are pure and wise, who lead holy lives, and that we must look for knowledge with persistency, humbleness, and faith, and that thus setting our feet upon the path the goal will loom in sight after many weary struggles.

Is it right or safe for one who has discovered a lead to a mine by one of his psychic senses to search for the mine, even if for a noble purpose? If he does find it, is he not liable to come to grief?

W.Q.J.—It is not the province of Theosophy to furnish pointers regarding mines or stocks, but since the question has arisen it does not seem wrong for one to find a mine by means of psychic sense. The number of successes in that line are very, very few, as psychics generally grossly overestimate the discovery, and often suppose there is a deposit worth going after, when in fact there is only a mere speck of metal. Nor have I ever heard that trouble is likely to result to one who finds a mine or anything else in that way. But at the same time the search for treasure by using the psychic senses is an ignoble pursuit. Yet if accidentally any sense of that sort revealed to me a mine and I felt sure of it, I might seek it. Disappointment, however, generally is the consequence.

In Forum 16 *it says: "Virtue leads only to heaven. Wisdom leads to union with the whole." What is here meant by virtue?*

W.Q.J.—According to the dictionaries the radical meaning of

virtue is *strength*. Other meanings are bravery, efficacy, valor, moral goodness, the abstaining from vice, or conforming to the moral law. In this last sense the word is used. There is nothing synonymous between *virtue* and *wisdom*. In the Christian scheme fear of God is the beginning of wisdom. There is the mere wisdom of erudition, but properly *wisdom* means *having knowledge* or *to know*; or skilled in arts, science, or philosophy, or in magic and divination. (2 *Samuel* xlv.) In homely language, then, to be virtuous is to be good; to be wise is to possess knowledge. If the kingdom of God is the perfectness of evolution, then knowledge is what leads to it sooner than virtue. Of course these terms are used with the theosophical scheme of man and nature in view, and in that light it appears that in addition to virtue we must have knowledge, for a life of virtue leads to pleasures of devachan, with good karma for next life and thus through many lives; but knowledge added to virtue shows how to use virtue and its results in finding and treading the path leading to the Supreme which is all.

Is it honest for a sincere Theosophist to celebrate in any way, whether by present-giving or by entertainments, the festivals of Christendom, such as Christmas and Easter? What is the practice of Occultists and the leaders of the Theosophical Society in this regard?

W.Q.J.—Theosophical sincerity is not a strange moral product of a new reform, but is exactly sincerity as always defined by philosophers and moralists in every age. The word *sincere* is derived from a Latin word which is in its turn supposed to be from *sine* "without" and *cera* "wax," that is, *pure honey*. The wax is prejudice, and he who harbors that, be he an F.T.S. or not, may consider his practice right in preventing him from viewing broadly all customs of all men, but one who accumulates the pure honey of sincerity may just as well join in Christmas festivities in Christendom as he would in those of Buddha's birthday in Ceylon.

Is it a fact that we have no right to condemn men, and should only condemn their conduct?

W.Q.J.—While I agree with much of the editor's answer to the above question I disagree from its spirit and certain inevitable conclusions flowing from it. *First*, I fail to see that in order to train the moral sense one has to practise condemnation of others. *Second*, The necessity for condemnation will never pass away if

we occupy ourselves in such practise while waiting for the world to grow so good that there will be no one to condemn. *Third*, It appears to me to be a new and untheosophical doctrine that our moral sense is to be or can be properly cultivated by engaging in condemnation of others.

The maxim cited in the Question was never intended by the writer or writers as one for application in the State, but solely for earnest disciples who endeavor to follow the very highest rules of conduct. We are so prone to condemn others and let our own faults go by that sincere disciples are taught, as a discipline, to cultivate their moral sense by inspecting their own faults, and let others do the same for themselves, but when the occasion demands condemnation, that it shall be of the wrong act. This cannot apply to a judge, or any other proper inquisitor, teacher, or guide. It is meant solely for those who, believing that our span of life is so short that there will be no time left if we busy ourselves with faults of others, prefer to improve their opportunity by purging themselves, by cleaning their own doorway, by taking the beam out of their own eye. For all sages and occult practitioners declare that among the necessary facts to be known, as the editor of the FORUM observes, though not admitted in his conclusions, is the fact that each time a man indulges in condemnation of another he is himself prevented by his own act from seeing his own faults, and that sooner or later his faults increase. If a sincere student thinks this be true he will hesitate about others and occupy himself with self-examination and self-conquest. This will take all of his time. We are not born as universal reformers of all people's faults and abuses, and theosophists can not waste their energies in criticasting others. Furthermore I strongly doubt if anyone was ever improved by the fault-finding of his acquaintances. It is natural discipline that makes the improvement, and that only. Indeed, I have observed in much experience with those who constantly criticize others that nothing results in 99 cases out of 100 but a smirking self-satisfaction in the breast of the critic, and anger or contempt in the heart of the victim of the fault-finding. One illustration will do for all, and it is this: One evening I was leaving the elevated railroad car with a friend who hardly misses a chance for pointing out omission or commission by others. As he went out first a roughly-dressed man blocked the way, appearing as if attempting to enter. My friend, being strong, caught him by the shoulders,

shoved him back, and said: "The rule is that passengers are let out first." Result: as he walked off feeling that he had properly corrected a fault, the man cursed him loudly, and audibly asked for an opportunity to kick him. Thus naught resulted but anger and malice in one heart—perhaps in the heart of a man born in adversity—and in the critic a self-satisfaction which is known to be the handmaid of delusion.

As Karma punishes all sins, is it right or desirable that human laws should punish crime by death or imprisonment?

W.Q.J.—My individual opinion upon the death penalty is that it is neither right nor desirable that human laws should punish crime by death, but this answer presupposes in the race such a knowledge of proper conduct and a constant practise of the same that every human being is a perfect law unto himself and for all, and that no laws are needed because all know and keep the laws of morality and nature. As, however, men as yet are very imperfect and are struggling to find the right rule of conduct, laws are necessary for evil-doers. Here, then, arises the question whether society is benefited by law imposing the death penalty, and as to that many able writers speak on one side and many on the other. To my mind it appears that the crime of murder has not diminished because of capital punishment, nor do I think any law will ever stamp out that offense. Indeed, I know that the majority of Theosophists regard capital punishment as a greater evil than that which it is directed against. But as Theosophists we have not much to do with such a question, since it lies in the domain of government. Our duty is to teach those ethics and that philosophy which alone will remedy the evil by raising men above the possibility of committing crime or becoming amenable to law. If we waste our energies in attempting reforms on the surface, either in law or in politics, a great opportunity will slip away before we know it.

The remaining query is upon the subject of punitive law in general, and on that my view is that the question put flies wild of any point, because even these very laws enacted for the punishment of evil-doers are themselves the product of Karma. The state of the race which evinces crime is due to its Karma, hence the present system, the criminals who fill our jails, the judiciary and the executive departments administering the laws, are all products of Karma. It therefore follows that where, through man-made laws, offenders are fined or imprisoned, such punishments are those of

Karma. It thus appears to me that the question is wholly one relating to reform in a mere social or political institution.

(Questions and answers included in this installment are reprinted from the following issues of the *Theosophical Forum*, in this sequence: October, 1890; June, 1890; January, 1891; March, 1891; January, 1891; February, 1891.)

THE UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE

The Hierophants and Initiates of the Mysteries in the Secret Schools in which all the Sciences inaccessible and useless to the masses of the profane were taught, had one universal, Esoteric tongue—the language of symbolism and allegory. This language has suffered neither modification nor amplification from those remote times down to this day. It still exists and is still taught. There are those who have preserved the knowledge of it, and also of the arcane meaning of the Mysteries; and it is from these Masters that the writer had the good fortune of learning, howbeit imperfectly, the said language. Hence her claim to a more correct comprehension of the arcane portion of the ancient texts written by avowed Initiates—such as were Plato and Iamblicus, Pythagoras, and even Plutarch—than can be claimed by, or expected from, those who, knowing nothing whatever of that "language" and even denying its existence altogether, yet set forth authoritative and conclusive views on everything Plato and Pythagoras knew or did not know, believed in or disbelieved. It is not enough to lay down the audacious proposition, "that an ancient philosopher is to be interpreted from himself [*i.e.*, from the dead-letter texts] and *by the contemporary history of thought*" (Prof. Jowett); he who lays it down has first of all to prove to the satisfaction, not of his admirers and himself alone, but *of all*, that modern thought does not woolgather in the question of Philosophy as it does on the lines of materialistic Science.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES IN LIFE

THAT view of one's Karma which leads to a bewailing of the unkind fate which has kept advantages in life away from us, is a mistaken estimate of what is good and what is not good for the soul. It is quite true that we may often find persons surrounded with great advantages but who make no corresponding use of them or pay but little regard to them. But this very fact in itself goes to show that the so-called advantageous position in life is really not good nor fortunate in the true and inner meaning of those words. The fortunate one has money and teachers, ability, and means to travel and fill the surroundings with works of art, with music and with ease. But these are like the tropical airs that enervate the body; these enervate the character instead of building it up. They do not in themselves tend to the acquirement of any virtue whatever but rather to the opposite by reason of the constant steeping of the senses in the subtile essences of the sensuous world. They are like sweet things which, being swallowed in quantities, turn to acids in the inside of the body. Thus they can be seen to be the opposite of good Karma.

What then is good Karma and what bad? The all embracing and sufficient answer is this:

Good Karma is that kind which the Ego desires and requires; bad, that which the Ego neither desires nor requires.

And in this the Ego, being guided and controlled by law, by justice, by the necessities of upward evolution, and not by fancy or selfishness or revenge or ambition, is sure to choose the earthly habitation that is most likely, out of all possible of selection, to give a Karma for the real advantage in the end. In this light then, even the lazy, indifferent life of one born rich as well as that of one born low and wicked is right.

When we, from this plane, inquire into the matter, we see that the "advantages" which one would seek were he looking for the strengthening of character, the unloosing of soul force and energy, would be called by the selfish and personal world "disadvantages."

NOTE.—This article was first printed by Wm. Q. Judge in the *Path* for July, 1895.

Struggle is needed for the gaining of strength; buffeting adverse eras is for the gaining of depth; meagre opportunities may be used for acquiring fortitude; poverty should breed generosity.

The middle ground in all this, and not the extreme, is what we speak of. To be born with the disadvantage of drunken, diseased parents, in the criminal portion of the community, is a punishment which constitutes a wait on the road of evolution. It is a necessity generally because the Ego has drawn about itself in a former life some tendencies which cannot be eliminated in any other way. But we should not forget that sometimes, often in the grand total, a pure, powerful Ego incarnates in just such awful surroundings, remaining good and pure all the time, and staying there for the purpose of uplifting and helping others.

But to be born in extreme poverty is not a disadvantage. Jesus said well when, repeating what many a sage had said before, he described the difficulty experienced by the rich man in entering heaven. If we look at life from the narrow point of view of those who say there is but one earth and after it either eternal heaven or hell, then poverty will be regarded as a great disadvantage and something to be avoided. But seeing that we have many lives to live, and that they will give us all needed opportunity for building up character, we must admit that poverty is not, in itself, necessarily bad Karma. Poverty has no natural tendency to engender selfishness, but wealth requires it.

A sojourn for everyone in a body born to all the pains, deprivations and miseries of modern poverty, is good and just. Inasmuch as the present state of civilization with all its horrors of poverty, of crime, of disease, of wrong relations almost everywhere, has grown out of the past, in which we were workers, it is just that we should experience it all at some point in our career. If some person who now pays no heed to the misery of men and women should next life be plunged into one of the slums of our cities for rebirth, it would imprint on the soul the misery of such a situation. This would lead later on to compassion and care for others. For, unless we experience the effects of a state of life we cannot understand or appreciate it from a mere description. The personal part involved in this may not like it as a future prospect, but if the Ego decides that the next personality shall be there then all will be an advantage and not a disadvantage.

If we look at the field of operation in us of the so-called advantages of opportunity, money, travel and teachers we see at once that it all has to do with the brain and nothing else. Languages, archæology, music, satiating sight with beauty, eating the finest food, wearing the best clothes, travelling to many places and thus infinitely varying impressions on ear and eye; all these begin and end in the brain and not in the soul or character. As the brain is a portion of the unstable, fleeting body the whole phantasmagoria disappears from view and use when the note of death sends its awful vibration through the physical form and drives out the inhabitant. The wonderful central master-ganglion disintegrates, and nothing at all is left but some faint aromas here and there depending on the actual love within for any one pursuit or image or sensation. Nothing left of it all but a few tendencies—*skandhas*, not of the very best. The advantages then turn out in the end to be disadvantages altogether. But imagine the same brain and body not in places of ease, struggling for a good part of life, doing their duty and not in a position to please the senses: this experience will burn in, stamp upon, carve into the character, more energy, more power and more fortitude. It is thus through the ages that great characters are made. The other mode is the mode of the humdrum average which is nothing after all, as yet, but an animal.

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE

THE INHERENT PERFECTIBILITY

We need not mind what we have not done nor yet what we have done. Have care only for what we are doing; so shall we best work and serve. Like St. Paul, we find the spirit willing but the flesh weak, yet the latter gets stronger all the time. It looks weaker than it is because of the higher standard of judgment we apply to it. Always the inner is the more perfect, and it is that which does the work of perfecting.

—ROBERT CROSBIE

letters · questions · comment

Kama or desire is discussed in the Ocean of Theosophy *(Chapter VI) as one of the principles of man's nature and not simply derived from the body as is ordinarily thought. It is implied in some places in Theosophical literature that this "mass of passions and desires" is a force eventually to be eliminated; in others, as in the* Glossary, *that Kama is an essential force in nature and the source of the highest impulses. What is the function of the principle of Kama in man?*

In the *Glossary*, the treatment of this subject suggests that it will not yield to simple classification. Under "Kama" it is described as "Evil desire, lust, volition; the cleaving to existence." In the next entry, "Kamadeva," however, after distinguishing it from its popular exoteric identification with the god of love, the *Glossary* goes on to say:

> The earlier Vedic description of Kama alone gives the keynote to what he emblematizes. Kama is the first conscious, all embracing desire for universal good, love, and for all that lives and feels, needs help and kindness, the first feeling of infinite tender compassion and mercy that arose in the consciousness of the creative One force, as soon as it came into life and being as a ray from the absolute.

In Chapter VI of the *Ocean*, Mr. Judge clarifies the function of desire in man's evolution:

> The passions and desires are not produced by the body, but, on the contrary, the body is caused to be by the former. It is desire and passion which caused us to be born, and will bring us to birth again and again in some body on this earth or another globe. It is by passion and desire we are made to evolve through the mansions of death called lives on earth. It was by the arising of desire in the unknown first cause, the one absolute existence, that the whole collection of worlds was manifested, and by means of the influence of desire in the now manifested world is the latter kept in existence.
>
> This fourth principle is the balance principle of the whole seven. It stands in the middle, and from it the ways go up or

> down. It is the basis of action and the mover of the will. As the old Hermetists say: "Behind will stands desire." For whether we wish to do well or ill we have to first arouse within us the desire for either course. The good man who at last becomes even a sage had at one time in his many lives to arouse the desire for the company of holy men and to keep his desire for progress alive in order to continue on his way. . . . On the material and scientific side of occultism—the use of the inner hidden powers of our nature—if this principle of desire be not strong, the master power of imagination cannot do its work, because though it makes a mould or matrix the will cannot act unless it is moved, directed, and kept up to pitch by desire.

In the *Answers to Questions on The Ocean of Theosophy*, a statement by Robert Crosbie suggests that Kama, although spoken of as one of the principles of man's nature necessary for the purposes of incarnation, has become so distorted that it can not be a permanent part of man as it is presently constituted:

> Kama is not an instrument or means by which the action or contact takes place; it is a basis or motive in use by the actor; the *instruments* are the astral and physical body. The astral body is a transitory aspect of the substance of the Inner Man in all cases where the "personality" has not been reduced to a cipher as a basis for conscious action. The exceptions are where the being has formed a "permanent astral." It may be conceived that the Masters have a permanent astral and something more, by which any kingdom of nature or state of matter may be contacted.

From this it seems clear that, at some point in his incarnation into matter, man has created, out of the principles evolved by him from the seven-principled Cosmos, an obsessive caricature, so to speak, of the principle of desire. It can be inferred, however, that since we are in the Fourth Round of this period of evolution, preoccupation with the principle of desire (and its chain of consequences) is a natural part of our evolution until we learn its proper uses. Identification of our consciousness with it might also be regarded as the result of ignorance. Mr. Crosbie says:

> We are at that stage of evolution where the principle of *Kama*, or Desire, prevails generally; this is because "the God within" has become involved in sentient physical existence and while in that transitory existence sets the causes in motion that inevitably bring the being back to a similar state and condition. In physical existence the state of any human being may be Buddhi-Manasic or Kama-Manasic; it is Manasic action in both

> cases, but in the former the action is of the nature of the Spiritual Self, while the latter is action performed from a basis of personal desires and selfishness. We can and should act on this plane from a better basis than personal desire; the object of all our studies is to accomplish this and help others to do likewise.

"Personal desires and selfishness," then, are not to be identified in terms of any particular act, but are whatever we desire at *the expense of the integrity of others*. This, again, is a matter of motive. Since we are living at a stage of evolution where desire is dominant, influenced by partially awakened mind, and colored by Karma from the past, the meaning of Kama for man is not whether or not he encourages "desire," but which kind of desire he permits to direct his action. The one who wishes to become a truly beneficent force in nature must certainly eliminate from his nature that desire which is for the personal self exclusively. It means also that the desires—the likes and dislikes—originating in this "self" are not the appropriate basis for self-conscious action. The conscious desire to act in whatever way will benefit all has its source in man's higher nature. Concerning the "function" of the principle of Kama, *The Secret Doctrine* states that two connecting principles—Manas and Kama—are required for the spiritual Monad to dwell in a physical form on earth. These two principles evolve the individualized consciousness of the incarnated intelligence in which the moral struggle and evolutionary process proceeds. We might say that Kama puts us in touch with the material world, where our work lies, and Manas enables us to understand who and what we are, and what must be done.

THE ESSENCE OF LYING

"The essence of lying is in self-deception, not in words; a lie may be told by silence, by equivocation, by the accent on a syllable, by a glance of the eye, attaching a peculiar significance to a sentence, and all these lies are worse and baser by many degrees than a lie plainly worded."

—JOHN RUSKIN

WESTERN OCCULTISM

CHANGES do not invariably mean trouble. Knowledge bridges over many things that would otherwise mean nothing but trouble.

All states are within ourselves, as we ought to understand by seeing that one gets good effects and another bad effects from precisely the same set of circumstances. So, we are not the victims of circumstances save as we make ourselves the victims.

Each one of us is a copy of the great Universe, and if we understand ourselves, we can move in accord with all the rest, every influence coming our way—or even perceptible to us—only an aid by which we can do good to others.

We have established a daily tabernacle which has its own peculiarities, but it is our own establishing—by our own thoughts and doings. We can either *learn*, or maintain present conditions through continued ignorance.

On the basis of our own true natures we should not seek for good, nor even to *be* good. We should seek to *do* good; then we can see we *are* good. A good man going on a journey has to take the path in the direction of his goal, no matter what the condition of that path. It may be muddy, but he must go through it.

"Goodness" that results from the compulsion of physical force, threats or bribes, physical or "spiritual," is useless. It must be a self-impulse from within, *a real preference for something higher*—not an abstention because of any fear of consequences in this or any future existence.

"Even this will pass away," is a good motto to keep in mind when things come up that are hard to stand. The "easy" and happy times are the periods of rest; the hard times the periods of training—opportunities for gaining strength and knowledge. If we can look at both in this light, we will not be overcome by either.

Kicking against the pricks hurts only the one who kicks; moreover the pricks seem to enjoy it, for being kicked they keep coming back.

NOTE.—From the sayings of Robert Crosbie (reprinted from THEOSOPHY, Volume 16).

Everything must turn out for the best, if we do the best we can with what we have all the time—that is, do our duty by every duty. But what a glorious thing it is to know where the right road lies! Whatever else may be doubtful, that is sure; and to feel that one is able by his own surety to point out the way to others! Help of that kind is greater than all other kinds put together.

Can we not see that we can *trust* a Universe that moves along unerringly under the law of perfect justice? We certainly can. We can go forward with an absolute reliance on the law of our own spiritual being, knowing whatever conditions come are necessary for us; knowing those very things we feel so hardly are object lessons for us which this present distress affords us an opportunity to overcome, and thus strengthen our true character.

Physical life is not necessarily a vale of sorrow. We could go on calmly, courageously, happily, relying on the law of our own natures. If we did so, we would bring our daily lives in line with that nature; for there is nothing of our action which does not come from the mind, and back of the mind is the *motive* we have in acting.

Motive is what makes our actions really "good" or "bad." If we are righteous in ourselves and desiring to do right, then all that we do will flow rightly from us and every function will be a righteous function.

One may be very sure that anyone claiming Adeptship is not an Adept, and this in the very nature of things.

The question arises: how much is real, how much for effect, how much self-delusion? The imagination is the image-making power and may create a glorified image of oneself.

It must be known that there are pretenders to a knowledge of occult laws; for unfortunately no great amount of good can be given at any time, without opening the doors to an equal amount of evil. To use these powers rightly, a universal attitude must be held, and all actions based upon that universal nature. Everyone who moves along that universal line learns the operation of these laws.

We have to ask ourselves if *we* are ready to accept the responsibility which such a knowledge implies. Could we trust ourselves to have these laws imparted to us which are set in operation *just by thinking and feeling?*

One might find himself at a certain place where the very power in him would bring about brilliant results by which he would be dazzled. Then he might drift into an exercise of power simply because he possessed it, even with the idea that he would never use it except for good. But so long as there is a selfish thought or a selfish feeling, so long as a feeling of revenge, or only of irritation, can be engendered in him, he will be in danger—because the same power that works good will work injury with equal strength.

The minor laws by which phenomena are produced on this plane are a small part of occult study in its universal aspect.

We would open the door to *all* powers by a daily and hourly and momentary living in accordance with the nature of the Self—seeing that every other being is but an aspect of the Self, and acting so that every other being will be helped on its way. For we cannot go it alone.

Every other stands as a vicarious atonement for us—an object lesson—and if we have reached a point higher than that which is ordinarily reached by men, then all the more are we constrained to duty by them.

There is no pretence of personal virtue or knowledge in handing on for the benefit of others what one perceives to be good for them. A claim, even a thought of personal virtue, is detrimental—because it is *personal.* The Egoic perceptions on this plane are limited by this very thing.

Art

The Will distinguishes Art as spiritual action. Relatively to themselves, the bee, the bird, the beaver, have no art; for what they do they do instinctively; but relatively to the Supreme Being, they have. And the same is true of all unconscious action: relatively to the doer, it is instinct; relatively to the First Cause, it is Art. In this sense, recognizing the Spirit which informs Nature, Plato rightly said, "Those things which are said to be done by Nature are indeed done by Divine Art." Art, universally, is the spirit creative. It was defined by Aristotle, "The reason of the thing, without the matter."

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

on the lookout

Emerging Greatness

In the *Scientific American* for last April, Lawrence S. Lerner and Edward A. Gosselin show that Giordano Bruno's influence on modern thought has been much more profound than his reputation as a precursor of Galileo would suggest. These writers contend that his championing of the Copernican system was not in behalf of scientific accuracy, but as a metaphor in the construction of a metaphysical system of thought which would heal the religious strife of the sixteenth century. Bruno saw in the theory that the earth revolves around the sun—an "emblem" of man's metaphysical relationship to the universe—a contention that aroused the opposition of Rome and led eventually to Bruno's execution by the Inquisition.

Man the Microcosm

Lerner and Gosselin continue:

> Bruno's real interest in heliocentrism was that it implies that the earth is not the only center of the universe. The implication allowed him to put forth his own views that the universe is infinite in extent, and that it contains an infinite number of worlds, each of which can be considered as much the center of the universe as any other. Bruno's belief in a centerless or multicentered universe was derived from the 15th-century Platonist Nicholas of Cusa, who had spoken philosophically of a universe of indeterminate dimensions whose "center is everywhere and whose circumference is nowhere." Indeed, this slogan embraced the Hermetic (and hence Brunian) definition of man. According to Bruno, the universe exhibits the same infinitude physically as the human mind does intellectually. The universe is therefore a fitting creation of an infinite God who is All in All. It is also a fitting object of contemplation for the infinite receptacle that is man's mind. The mystical element in all of this is perfectly obvious. According to Aristotelian-Neoplatonic psychology, the mind becomes what it contemplates. Thus man-microcosm becomes universe-macrocosm and as a result is brought closer to the Creator.

Physics as Metaphor

Bruno's philosophic purpose is contrasted with present-day thinking:

> He was truly a Renaissance man and in no sense a modern one. He reflected the holistic approach of the Renaissance in that he believed all knowledge is interrelated. The aim of, and the key to, this interrelation is understanding the place of man in the universe, that is, the relationship between man and God. Knowledge is useful insofar as it elucidates that essential relationship. Like all knowledge, physical knowledge is seen as part of a vast metaphor. . . . Bruno's real interest lies in constructing an image that is large in scope, convincing and aesthetically pleasing that leads to metaphysical enlightenment. It is in these nonmodern terms that Bruno invoked the Copernican theory.

Magic and Science

Bruno, in company with many other Renaissance Neoplatonists, was a student of Hermes Trismegistus. They believed that a golden age, superior physically and morally, had existed long before the sixteenth century, and that man was not the creature of a Divine Being, but was himself of divine origin:

> In contrast to the orthodox Christian view that man had fallen from a state of grace through the original sin, the Hermetists believed man had descended voluntarily from the nonmaterial world of the Divine Mind to earth and continued to partake of the divine nature that had been his before the descent. There was indeed a channel for continual communion between man in his divine aspect and God. This channel could be deepened and widened by acquiring a kind of recondite knowledge we would call occult, which relied on certain affinities between man and the cosmos that Nicholas of Cusa had discussed. As a result of the curious juxtaposition of belief in magic and reason as paths to knowledge of God, many serious scholars, including Dee, Gilbert, Ficino and Paracelsus, took part simultaneously (and with no sense of incongruity) in magical and scientific investigations.

The Power of Mind

It is the contention of these writers that Bruno used the religious controversies over dogma in his time to draw the reader to recognize the creative potential of the human mind for arriving at knowledge, both physical and metaphysical. In maintaining, contrary to the laws of optics, that a light source far enough

removed can illuminate an entire sphere, Bruno was actually obliging his readers to see that the light of mind can reach anywhere and illumine any object it chooses. A further instance employs an old argument made by some of the early church fathers:

> Either the earth is flat or, if it is spherical, there can be no people living at the antipodes (that is, on the other side). If there were, their up would be our down and their summer our winter. Moreover, the descent of Christ at the Second Coming could not be seen by all. Since the ancients could not travel to the antipodes, people there could not be children of Adam, tainted by the original sin and capable of redemption. By extension such people would not be subject to a 16th century pope. Knowledge gained through the great explorations had of course exploded this theory. Bruno is saying figuratively that through the new knowledge he is imparting, the metaphysical counterpart of those explorations can be accomplished.

Healing Philosophy

By showing the difference between argument about literal interpretation, which must materialize metaphysical ideas, and the light of spiritual mind, Bruno hoped to reconcile Catholics and Protestants and end the religious and political strife and intrigue that was poisoning European civilization: He called the Copernican theory a "hellebore," an herb used in the treatment of mental illness. It is easy to see why the Inquisition, not much concerned about Bruno's theories of the physical universe, condemned the radical implications of his teachings in the struggle to liberate the human mind from theological domination.

Bruno's confidence and belief in man as in part a divine being was so heretical from the standpoint of both Catholicism and Protestantism, which regarded man as the impotent progeny of original sin, that his ideas could hardly prevail at that time. But his philosophical rationale of man as a being capable of acquiring knowledge and improving himself have made him, according to Mr. Lerner and Mr. Gosselin, a major contributor to the rebirth of man's independence in the form of the scientific revolution.

Behaviorism Popular

A useful and much-needed criticism of Behaviorist psychology is provided by Stephan L. Chorover, a teacher at MIT, in *Psychology Today* (October, 1973). There has been a wide return to the

theories and practice of John B. Watson in recent years, especially in public institutions where care is essential and rehabilitation is regarded as desirable, and the triumphs of Behaviorist methods have been heralded in popular as well as technical journals. The failure of psychoanalytical methods has often been a cause of this revival of Behaviorism, as explained by its practitioners. Dr. Chorover contends that the behaviorist focus on correcting the "deviance" of the individual may easily lead to neglect of inhumane conditions, while "the responses, the systems, and values the deviant individual is being conditioned to accept" are not given critical examination. The Behaviorist approach focuses increasingly on the tools available to persons in authority to alter undesirable behavior. The MIT professor of psychology says:

> Behaviorists do change the environments that shape deviant behavior. But this usually means little more than giving increasingly effective means of control to those in power. Their techniques are often based on "positive reinforcement" and thus may not frighten us as much as the manifestly cruel "averse conditioning" depicted in *A Clockwork Orange*. But it is precisely because they are superficially more acceptable that they may be more dangerous to all of us in the long run.

Small Range of Choices

Dr. Chorover goes on to say that Behaviorists have a very narrow concept of what control is: "That all behavior can be adequately described in terms of stimuli, responses, and reinforcements." This view leads to "a preoccupation with only those aspects of a problem that can be analyzed in these terms, and permits only a narrow range of possible solutions." He suggests that by examining the values underlying the systems of behavior we are supporting, a much wider range of solutions becomes available: "The crucial questions, however, concern how, and to what degree, we should endeavor to control each other." In avoiding consideration of these questions, people become more vulnerable to manipulation by others than ever before:

> [Behavior modification] is now used with growing confidence in mental institutions, schools, business and individual therapy. Its proponents urge parents and Government authorities to give up their outmoded methods of coercion and punishment in favor of more efficient and "humane" behavior-management techniques. Their promotion has proven effective, and these techniques are catching on.

The Psychologist "Knows"

It should be pointed out that the behavioristic techniques which prove so successful are always in relation to rather simple objectives, such as learning appropriate personal hygiene, reasonable dietary control and cleanliness, and other matters which become "objective" problems in public institutions such as mental hospitals. In the application of these methods, the psychologist "knows" what is correct behavior and he sets out to get it. You might say that his method has value only in relation to objectives concerning which there can hardly be two opinions concerning what is "right." The focus is of course on either pleasure or pain, not on more basic reasons for human behavior. And the method wholly ignores all those aspects of human life in which no one can be sure of what another ought to do, and no right at all to try to get him to do any one thing or another by non-rational means. The *ego*, as indwelling mind and moral agent, is left out and has no place in this system. The dark political implications of such a view of human behavior should be plain to all, and this is a natural concern of Dr. Chorover, but the philosophical implications, or rather anti-philosophical implications, are much more serious.

"Purely Technological" Approach

This seems evident from what he says:

> Neuropsychology teaches us that human beings are varied, complex and poorly understood. If we accept this modest insight, we will take an important step away from the arbitrary and rigid technological posture into which we have become frozen. Then we may see that the obsession to control behavior ignores the subjective, sociological and historical context in which all behavior occurs. In spite of its great practical power, the purely technological orientation toward human beings is blind to these important aspects of our existence.

The comment of this psychologist, at the humanist level, is to the point and valuable. So also his conclusion:

> With courage and insight we may still be able to seize back from technology both our freedom and our dignity. In the words of a poet, No equation can divine the quality of life, no instrument record, no computer conceive it—only bit by bit can feeling man lovingly retrieve it.

"The Whole Bundle"

A familiar escape from the problems of an excessively technical-minded civilization is often effected by remarking that there is nothing wrong with technology, in itself, but that human uses of it are often reprehensible. Replying to an editorial in *Science* which made this contention, K. N. Lee said in a letter in *Science* for June 22, 1973:

> It is useful to distinguish between the capacities of a technology and the ways in which that technology is implemented. A technology can be described as a bundle of capacities—a set of abilities or ways to do something. The principal capacity of an automobile is to transport people and goods; a secondary capacity, to emit air pollutants. Traditionally, successful technologies have catered to or created tastes related to the principal capacity, which was thus invariably perceived as desirable by its users. But one buys the entire bundle, and sometimes secondary capacities become sufficiently undesirable to challenge the bundle as a whole—as in the case of the automobile. Often, too, problems arise in the implementation, in the way the technical capacities are distributed. Public projects such as highways are often controversial, not because they are poorly designed from a technical or engineering standpoint, but because they reallocate resources, such as housing, in ways alleged to be inequitable. Even if the principal capacity of a technology is universally desired, therefore, its bundle of capacities, implemented in a particular pattern spatially, socially, and economically, may still defeat the achievement of any humane purpose.

In the Service of Man

Doubtless there are forms of technology that would not have the effect of displacing human responsibility as well as the sort of experience that is valuable to the inner man, but for development of such tools, moral philosophy must be the ruling principle, and not the sole goal of "production." Here a comment on modern technology, taken from *Small Is Beautiful* by E. F. Schumacher, is directly applicable:

> The type of work which modern technology is most successful in reducing or even eliminating is skillful, productive work of human hands, in touch with real materials of one kind or another. In an advanced industrial society, such work has become increasingly rare, and to make a decent living by doing such work has become virtually impossible. A great part of the modern neurosis may be due to this very fact; for the

> human being, defined by Thomas Aquinas as a being with brains and hands, enjoys nothing more than to be creatively, usefully, productively engaged with both his hands and his brain. Today, a person has to be wealthy to be able to enjoy this simple thing, this very great luxury: he has to be able to afford space and good tools; he has to be lucky enough to find a good teacher and plenty of free time to learn and practice. He really has to be rich enough not to need a job; for the number of jobs that would be satisfactory in these respects is very small indeed.

The question is, What sort of thinking will lead men to arrange their economic affairs in ways that will serve the *human* needs of people, as distinguished from the survival-requirements of a technological and economic system? It is surely time to consider how men work, spend their time, and regard themselves, as of greater importance than the commercial value of what they make and how the proceeds get divided.

Fact into "Myth"

The swing away from the gross materialism of decades ago is evident enough, the problem now being: To what forms of belief is the swing leading? One could say that the popular materialism or "atheism" of the 1920's and 1930's was both unearned and irresponsible, since these opinions were not grounded in hard thinking but were taken as already shaped by earlier freethinkers who had broken away from all orthodoxies with not only the courage to be "different," but after some serious study of what they regarded as "scientific truth." Today, with the great reaction against science well under way, a similar "will to believe" is in evidence, this time giving indiscriminate welcome to pseudo-occult extravagances. A recent article in the *Los Angeles Times* tells about a bookshop and "school" in this area which is dispensing information about the lost continent of Atlantis and its inhabitants, the "facts" being obtained through a medium. "We make these statements but we don't try to prove them," a spokesman of the school said. The contrast with Madame Blavatsky's treatment of the subject should be evident to all readers. Such matters are not helpful when taken as beliefs, but only as part of the vast scheme of man's evolution on the planet. When the setting and scenery of this great drama is given greater importance than the protagonist—evolving man—the idea of Atlantis loses its value, becoming distraction and romantic irrelevance, to say nothing of the spiritualist trimmings.

Love of the Land

In an article adapted from an address at Colgate University (*New York Times*, July 1, 1973), William O. Douglas tells his readers that it is only by loving the land which sustains us that we can live on it without destroying it. Although constitutional guarantees, he said, provide the framework for achieving an organic relationship with the environment, only the active participation of those who care for that kind of stewardship can make it a reality. He pointed out that love of the land is of a different order of thinking than the calculating assessment of the best long-run policies for its use. He says of the North American continent:

> The efforts of those who engage in participatory democracy must not be casual or occasional but rather continuous, lest we all walk submissively to the music of the drums of those who talk "public interest" but whose aim is "private gain." . . .
>
> We must learn to love it and cherish it. We must put our arms around it and protect it as we would a fragile but precious child. Technology can destroy it. But it can also save it. Only we the people, not technology, have "values." Love, respect, admiration, tenderness—these must be our attitude toward this biosphere if it is not to meet the technological Armageddon.

Rhythms of the Earth

In the *Los Angeles Times* (Sept. 9, 1973), Coleman McCarthy notes the reissue of Aldo Leopold's *Sand County Almanac* and *Round River* in a single paperback edition with some similar observations on the importance of a sense of integration between man and nature. Mr. McCarthy writes:

> It is hard to estimate the influence of Leopold, but in these frightening days of strip mine machines ten stories high and the government cheerleading oilmen to gash a hole down Alaska's middle, his responsiveness to the sanctity of the land continues to be a force among those who realize the rhythms of the earth are our rhythms.

A quality of realism pervades Leopold's understanding of these balances, perceived by those to whom integration means excluding nothing.

"The One Ennobling Religion"

The *Times* writer continues:

> He speaks of "the biotic community," in which man is a member, not a master. "Conservation is a state of harmony

between men and land. By land is meant all of the things on, over or in the earth. Harmony with land is like harmony with a friend: you cannot cherish his right hand and chop off his left. That is to say, you cannot love game and hate predators; you cannot conserve the waters and waste the ranges; you cannot build the forest and mine the farm.

"The land is one organism. Its parts, like our own parts, compete with each other. The competitions are as much a part of the inner workings as the cooperations. You can regulate them—cautiously—but not abolish them."

The study of man's interdependent relationships with Nature, as taught in Theosophy, would be a great help to those who want to accept and apply Aldo Leopold's counsels. Madame Blavatsky says in *The Secret Doctrine* (I, 381 fn.): "The silent worship of abstract or *noumenal* Nature, the only divine manifestation, is the one ennobling religion of Humanity."

Ancient Symbols

In reviewing Alexander Marshack's *Roots of Civilization*, Charles B. M. McBurney (*New York Review of Books*, Sept. 20, 1973) deals encouragingly with the author's idea that prehistoric art represents far more than the logs of ancient hunters—suggesting in fact a rather remarkable awareness that time passes in regular cycles. (THEOSOPHY 58:379.) Although Mr. McBurney finds the supporting evidence fragmentary, he believes that the theory deserves serious attention. No archeological discoveries of Stone Age Art, he suggests, compel us to think of early man as only a predator, intent on one meal after another. Marshack proposes that marks and drawings on bones, tools, and other small objects might, because of their obviously systematic arrangement, be symbolic representations or ritual stories, suggesting a psychic life quite different from that of any animal.

"Story" or "Ritual"

The reviewer says:

. . . One observation he [Marshack] puts forward, if correct, is certainly of some significance on its own account. Many well-known cases of redrawing or over-drawing animal representations show signs of being done separately at intervals of time, in a few cases of substantial duration. In one case he claims that a scene showing some kind of bird is overlaid by what is apparently a nest with eggs, and finally covered in turn

by a sketch of a snake. Since at least two if not all of these separate symbols were made with different tools he draws the conclusion that "the reconstruction implied a sequential composition in time, apparently representing a series of seasonal events: the arrival of ducks, after this the building of nests and the laying of eggs, and finally the theft of eggs by the snake." All this, he feels, adds up to a "story" if not a "ritual."

Ancient Man Thought and Reasoned

Readers may wonder why these simple suggestions are treated so cautiously by the reviewer. Mr. McBurney explains that virtually any sort of theorizing about ancient man's cultural life has long been regarded with great suspicion by anthropologists who study the remains of ancient man. The men of the Old Stone Age, which is said to have begun over two million years in the past and lasted until anywhere from 10,000 to 4,000 years ago, are not believed by anthropologists to have been capable of much conceptual thinking, and it is precisely this kind of thinking which Mr. Marshack contends is represented in the decorated objects under consideration. Time cycles such as the seasons, when identified and symbolized, are abstract ideas—concepts. The point of the author is that "men of the Upper Paleolithic age from 32,000 to 10,000 years ago thought and reasoned much as men in comparable societies do today"—a view the reviewer finds acceptable if not pressed too far. This book, McBurney says, is part of a wave of interest in the intelligence, as distinguished from the animality, of ancient man, and is attracting much attention for this reason. In his conclusion, the reviewer remarks:

> I feel that Marshack has made a real contribution to evidence for patterned symbolism connected specifically with seasonality and linked to a practice of counting which seems to have spread virtually throughout the Upper Paleolithic of Europe.

High Artistic Ability

The student of Theosophy may nonetheless feel that there have been few gains, if any, in understanding of primitive man since publication of *The Secret Doctrine*. In the second volume of that book, on page 720, H. P. Blavatsky reproduces the picture of a reindeer engraved on an antler by paleolithic man, commenting in the text:

> . . . this is a specimen of an engraving made by a *Palæolithic*

"savage": Palæolithic meaning the "earlier Stone-age" man, one supposed to have been as savage and brutal as the brutes he lived with. Leaving the modern South Sea Islander, or even any Asiatic race, aside, we defy any grown-up schoolboy, or even a European youth, one who has never studied drawing, to execute such an engraving or even a pencil sketch. Here we have the true artistic *raccourci*, and correct lights and shadows without any *plane* model before the artist, who copied direct from nature, thus exhibiting a knowledge of anatomy and proportion. . . .

This engraved antler proves as eloquently as any fact can that the evolution of the races has ever proceeded in a series of rises and falls, that man, perhaps, is as old as encrusted Earth, and—if we can call his Divine Ancestor "Man"—far older still.

Cyclic Decline

She quotes the father of Geology, Lyell, as saying that there is no geological evidence to show that the "inferior races" always preceded the higher races, then turns to a passage by Max Müller:

"What do we know of savage tribes beyond the *last chapter of their history*?" (Cf. this with the esoteric view of the Australians, Bushmen, as well as of Palæolithic European man, the Atlantean offshoots retaining a relic of a lost culture, which throve when the parent Root-Race was in its prime.) "Do we ever get an insight into their antecedents. . . . *How have they come to be what they are?* . . . Their language proves, indeed, that these so-called heathens, with their complicated systems of mythology, their artificial customs, their unintelligible whims and savageries, are not the creatures of today or yesterday. Unless we admit a special creation for these savages, they must be as old as the Hindus, the Greeks and Romans (far older). . . . They may have passed through ever so many vicissitudes, and *what we consider as primitive, may be, for all we know,* a RELAPSE INTO SAVAGERY or a corruption of something that was more rational and intelligible in former stages."

This argument is by no means done, but continues over several pages. What we see, in books like *The Roots of Civilization*, are landmarks of the exceedingly slow course of progress in wearing away, bit by bit, the materialistic assumptions of nineteenth-century anthropological science.